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NOTE ON FOOD HABITS OF THE BULL SNAKE.

Recently I received a letter from Mr. Frank T. Merrill, a prominent citizen of Preston, Idaho, in which he relates an incident that illustrates the enormous feeding capacity of the western Bull Snake, presumably *Pituophis catenifer deserticola* Stejneger. In the summer of 1913, when the circumstance occurred, field mice were very numerous in an alfalfa field, where Mr. Merrill was working. A part of the communication follows:

"There were some young boys working with me, and one of them ran on to a large Blow Snake with its head and about two-thirds of its body under a pile of hay. This boy hit it with his fork. As soon as I saw what he was doing I called to him, but it was too late. I told him of the good the snake was doing and as he questioned it, I took the snake by the tail, made a whip cracker of it, [and killed it.] We took thirty-five small mice from its body. It seemed to like the very young mice best as nearly all of them were without hair, although some were one-third grown. This snake was five feet three inches long and was very large."

Just how many mice this snake was consuming daily is difficult to state, as digestion in reptiles usually proceeds more slowly than in the higher vertebrates. Nevertheless, observations generally have proved the beneficial habits of the Bull Snake, and every available source should be utilized in acquainting the public with these facts, as well as in affording protection to this useful reptile.

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